1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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241 463 much of the land is useless. Again, a farm small in area might be exclusively devoted to the sort of economy which is usually found on very large farms. In any single case, statistical generalities do not hold, of course. But in the large kind of correlation which a count of varying factors affords, bulk correspondences turn up with complete regularity.

241 463 ●162 The course by which this conclusion is reached takes one through the devious labyrinth of Free State Government statistical abstracts. In 1926, the last census year before the authors' field work was undertaken, the numbers living in country districts, "outside villages and towns with 200 or more population," made up 63 per cent of the Free State's population of almost 3,000,000. They were 1,815,496. Of the 1,307,662 classed as "occupied persons 12 years of age and over" for the whole Free State, 672,129, or 51 per cent, were engaged in agriculture. Any attempt, then, to understand the human setting of Irish farming involves an inquiry into the forces motivating the lives of well over half the country's people.

241 433 In 1926 this agricultural population produced a total output valued at £64,757,000. Industry in Ireland produced goods to the value of only a little over half that figure (£34,000,000 net output).

231 433 In the agricultural output of that year, the proportions of the various products indicate the character of the agriculture. Foodstuffs, with livestock products among them, made up the bulk of the output. Milk products accounted for £13,600,000; cattle, exported alive or slaughtered within the country, accounted for another £13,800,000. Pigs and eggs made up £9,800,000 and £6,690,000 respectively. Other livestock such as poultry, sheep, and horses accounted for the rest, in that order of importance. Wool and sundry items such as honey brought in a mere £700,000. All of these, the total output of livestock, reached a value of

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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Fergus River, where there are many "ranches" and, in parts, extensive oats tillage.

Statistics are available only for the whole of Clare; they give a comprehensive view of the county's farming.[3] All but 21.6 per cent of the population of 95,064 lived in country districts. The area they worked, 787,768 acres, was divided into 15,857 holdings, of which 1,179 did not exceed one acre, 909 contained from 1 to 5, 841 from 5 to 10, 1,108 from 10 to 15, and 3,767 from 15 to 30, 3,617 from 30 to 50, and 3,135 from 50 to 100. The farms larger than 100 acres numbered 997 in the 100 to 200 acre group, and 394 exceeding 200 acres. Clare thus fell into a category among counties in which medium-sized holdings were normal, but both the small farms and the large rancher type were present.

We have no separate statistics for Clare's produce, but we know that in June 1932 the land was being utilized in the following manner. There were only 465 acres of wheat, 335 acres of barley, 207 acres of rye, 1 acre of beans and peas, 147 acres of fruit, 3 acres of sugar beet, 57 acres of experimental ensilage for cattle, and 151 acres of miscellaneous root and green crops. The figures[4] show the small part played by vegetable products other than cabbage and potatoes used for human food. Bread, the great staple, was of course, made from imported flour or wheat. Potatoes and oats, however, made a better showing, with 13,518 and 8,199 acres respectively devoted to them. Turnips and mangels accounted for 3,897 and 306 acres respectively; like potatoes and oats, they are used for both human and animal consumption. This was the extent of ploughed land.

The great bulk of the area was, of course, in hay and pasture. There were 2,791 acres of first-year hay, 131,429 acres of other hay, and 394,791 acres of pasture.

[3] Figures taken from Annual Report, County Clare Council Agricultural Committee, June 1932.

[4] Report of the County Clare Agricultural Committee, 1932.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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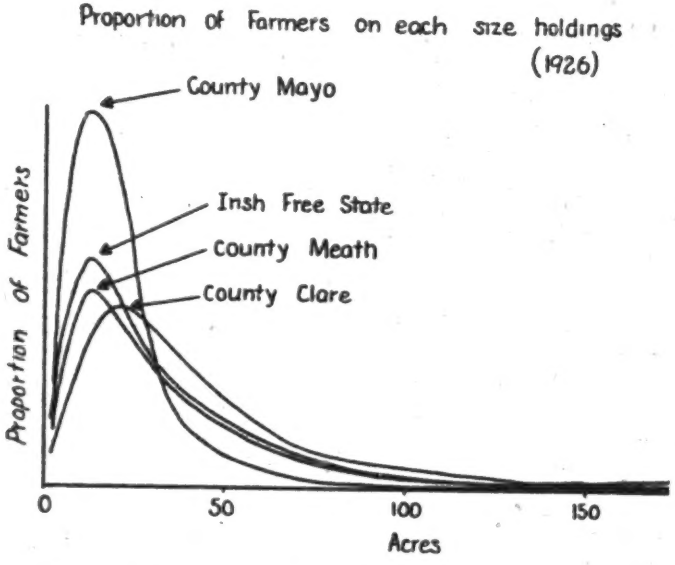
figures for the largest size holdings show that the machines on the smaller farms were more than sufficient for the type of agriculture carried on." [11] For instance, on farms of 30–50 acres there were 137 ploughs to every 1,000 acres of ploughed land. But much less than half that number were

FIGURE 2



sufficient for the same acreage of ploughed land on holdings over 500 acres. The difference reflects itself statistically not only in the goods produced but in the tools and techniques used.

More important, however, for an understanding of the social behavior involved, is a further great difference to be seen in the numbers of persons living upon the various sized farms. The numbers of persons supporting themselves upon the small holdings are much greater than those upon

[11] *Ibid.*

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

241 large farms. Figure 2 shows this graphically. County Mayo
● 162 there represents one extreme of "congestion" and County Meath another. County Clare is of such mixed character that its position looks anomalous. The figure deals only with farmers and does not, as we shall see, represent the real situation, for it leaves out of account those who work the farm along with its farmer owner.

In 1926 there were 268,930 farmers in the Irish Free State, the largest block of which supported themselves upon farms of from 15 to 30 acres, that is, upon small farms. Their number was 75,225. Farmers numbering 51,196 worked farms of from 30 to 50 acres, and 41,052 farms of from 50 to 100. On smaller farms than the 15–30 acre norm there were 11,608 farmers on 1–5 acre farms and 29,180 on 5–10 acre ones. On larger farms than 100 acres there were, however, only 22,660 farmers.

The counties, of course, differed widely in this respect, but in general the counties where large holdings were numerous supported a much smaller farm population than those where smaller holdings prevailed. Thus Meath, a ranching county of 577,000 acres, supported only 4,403 farmers, while Clare, with an area only about one and one-half times as large, supported 10,320 farmers in a much less rich and more mountainous soil. Indeed, it is one of the anomalies most regretted by the present De Valera government (among others) that Ireland's population is concentrated in the poorer and more mountainous parts of the island. Clare, of course, does not present such an extreme case as the so-called "congested" counties of Mayo, Kerry, and Galway.

In County Clare small farmers are, of course, definitely in the majority. The number of true "ranchers" is few. In 1926 the proportions were 3,020 male farmers on farms 15–30 acres (the largest group), 2,280 on farms 30–50, 2,033 on farms 50–100. In the groups smaller than 15 acres

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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there were 828 farmers on farms 10–15 acres and 486 on farms 5–10. Farmers living on farms under 5 acres are few (180). Those on farms up to 200 number 597 and above 200, 218.

When the total population engaged in agriculture is considered rather than merely the farmers (owners), the greater numbers living upon small holdings become even more apparent. A full report based upon the 1926 census had not yet appeared, but a report was published upon the 1912 figures at the time the 1926 figures were released.[12] From that report it is at once apparent that the difference between large and small farms extends to the population engaged upon them and the type of labor employed. This new difference demonstrates a marked contrast, still apparent today, in the way in which large and small farmers carry on their economies.

In 1926 the number of farmers and relatives assisting them in the Saorstat was 533,025 and those otherwise engaged in agriculture numbered only 139,104. The figures of the Report, based upon the 1912 census, show higher numbers, but the proportion of hired to family labor had not materially changed. From the tables of the Report, it is established that "only 26% were wage earners," that is, were not farmers and their relatives, working without periodic monetary recompense on an employee basis. Relating this to size of farms, it was discovered that not only were "5 times as many persons working on farms of 15 to 30 acres and 3½ times as many on farms of 30–50 acres as on farms of over 200 acres," [13] but that also "family labor accounted for 89% of the total on farms 1–15 acres but only 24% for farms of over 200 acres. . . . Taking all holdings into account, 74% of the persons working on farms consisted of farmers, their wives, sons, daughters, and other relatives," and only "15% were permanent wage earners and 11%

[12] *Agricultural Statistics, 1847–1926*, p. liv. [13] *Ibid.*, p. li.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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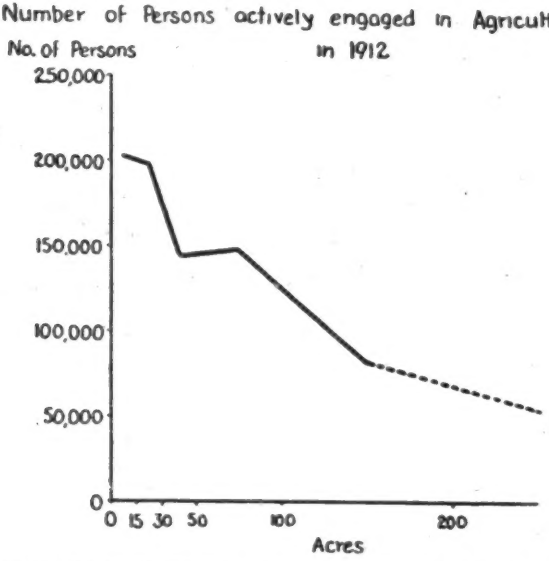
241 were temporary employees." [14] In other words, the small
● 162 farm is generally worked by the family of the owner, while
464 the large farm, particularly the ranch, is worked by agricultural laborers employed by the owner.

FIGURE 3



These are the actual numbers arranged proportionately, in true descending scale, with the size of the holding. Figures for all Ireland. The figures are quite comparable with those of County Clare for 1932, where in records published in the local newspaper by the County Council Committee on Agriculture it was stated that on farms of 15–30 acres, the median-sized holding, on which the plurality of the farm population live, there were 10 acres to each person. But on farms of 200 acres and over, more than 35 acres were required for each person the farms supported.

In Figure 3 the tables are reduced to a graphic representation which shows well how much truth there is in the Irish assertion that "the smaller the farm, the larger the number of people it supports." One has only to look at it to understand much of Irish political currents.

[14] *Agricultural Statistics, 1847–1926*, p. lii.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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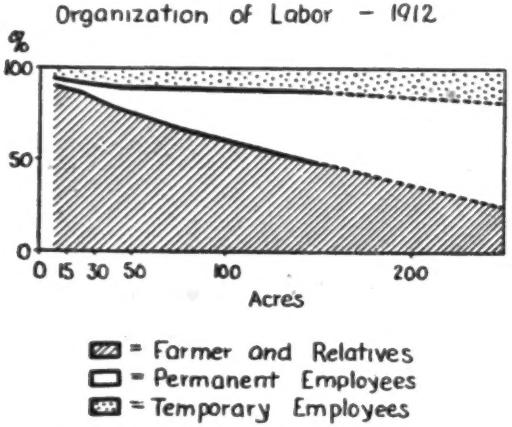
In Clare the same situation is present. Most, if not nearly all, of the work of the small farmers is done by the family relatives. And for the whole county in 1926, 83.5% of all males engaged in agricultural pursuits were farmers or farmers' relatives (and 99 per cent of the rather small number of females). Only in the two districts which we have

FIGURE 4



The chart again shows a constant progression. The larger the farm, the less the dependence upon other members of the family and the more often hired hands are present. The chart begins on the left with a figure of 89 per cent of farmers of 1–15 acres depending upon family help and ends at the right with 24 per cent of farmers of over 200 acres depending upon such help.

already mentioned as regions of large holdings and ranches, Ballyvaughan and Ennis, did the percentage fall appreciably below that figure (to 73 per cent and 75 per cent).

Figure 4 presents this difference in organization of labor for all Ireland in 1912.

Small farmers and large farmers make a different disposal of their products. At the same time there is an exchange of products between the two groups.

These facts are to be got from the many statistics reflect-

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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coincident upon that change cannot be assigned as the sole cause of emigration.

As the decline in population has been more characteristic of the small farmers, it may be possible to associate it with social conditions pertaining among that class. They have participated in the very agricultural changes which are thought to have caused their dispersal. They enjoyed the high prosperity of the closing decades of the last century, and won the progressive reforms of agrarian tenure. Yet they continued to send forth thousands of emigrants. Fluctuating economic conditions have undoubtedly had their effect, but factors whose greatest demonstrable result is merely to stay or hurry the stream of emigration cannot be evoked as efficient causes. In taking the problem directly to the small farmer, it will become possible to sketch the social setting in which emigration takes its form.

Clearly connected with the decline in population are other demographic statistics, particularly those of marriage. They present features which are unique among civilized peoples. Inasmuch as they are again indications of an underlying uniform social pattern whose occurrences they record, it is necessary to analyze them in terms of the behavior patterns of rural Ireland. Like emigration, they are more characteristic of the country people. Springing from marriage, they are thus directly indicative of social forces within the small farmers' family economy.

Briefly stated, they present the following characteristics: In Saorstat Eireann in 1926, according to the census then conducted, there was a larger proportion of unmarried persons of all ages than in any other country for which records are kept. Marriage, furthermore, did not take place until a comparatively late age. Thus 80 per cent of males between twenty-five and thirty years of age were unmarried in 1926, 62 per cent of males thirty to thirty-five, 30 per cent of males thirty-five to forty, and 26 per cent of males fifty-five to

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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sixty-five. The significance of these figures springs from their comparison with other countries. In the United States only 39 per cent of males twenty-five to thirty are unmarried, 24 per cent between thirty and thirty-five, and only 10 per cent between fifty-five and sixty-five. Denmark, an agricultural country similar in many ways to Ireland, had only 49 per cent, 25 per cent, 15 per cent, and 8 per cent of these age groups not yet benedict, respectively. In England the percentages were 45 per cent, 25 per cent, 16 per cent, and 10 per cent, a great contrast to the sister island. Indeed, in the Free State the percentages of unmarried among the males of each age group are usually double those of other countries.

Unmarried females are also very numerous, though not so excessively so as is the case with the males. In the age groups twenty-five to thirty, thirty to thirty-five, thirty-five to forty, and fifty-five to sixty-five the percentages are respectively 62 per cent, 42 per cent, 32 per cent, and 24 per cent. In Denmark the same groups showed only 39 per cent, 25 per cent, 19 per cent, and 14 per cent; in England, 41 per cent, 26 per cent, 20 per cent, and 15 per cent. Figure 11 gives a graphic comparison between the Irish Free State and three other modern countries.

Later marriage and high incidence of bachelorhood is, like population decline, more pronounced among the country people. And among them, it is highest in those areas where small holdings prevail. In County Clare 88 per cent of the males between twenty-five and thirty in rural districts were unmarried. This percentage is not abnormally high for Ireland, as Sligo, Galway, Mayo, and Leitrim, areas of small holdings, have 90 per cent and Roscommon 91 per cent. In Clare 90 per cent of women between twenty and twenty-five were unmarried, yet six western counties have higher percentages than Clare's.

In fact the thickly populated and poorer western counties

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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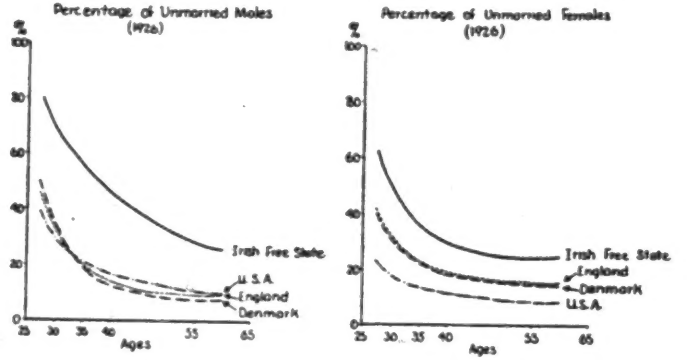
show a higher percentage in all age groups of unmarried than the eastern counties. In spite of this, however, there is a higher percentage of all females in eastern than in western counties. This fact is directly correlated with the difference in sexual ratio between eastern and western coun-

FIGURE 11

UNMARRIED PERSONS IN THE IRISH FREE STATE AND THREE OTHER COUNTRIES, 1926



ties. In Dublin and the other large cities the female population exceeds the male, while in country districts and smaller towns there is a male excess. The proportion of females per thousand males is lower than that of any of the other twenty-one European countries. It is greater, however, than that of such new countries as the United States. There are 973 females to every 1,000 males in the Free State.

If marriage is so long delayed and there are so few women relatively in the country districts, the condition in the towns is not quite so marked. Females outnumber the males there. Likewise marriage takes place much earlier. In County Clare the aggregate rural areas show 88 per cent of males twenty-five to thirty and 73 per cent thirty to thirty-five unmarried, but the aggregate town areas show only

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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70 per cent and 50 per cent. There is a general tendency: the larger the town, the earlier marriage takes place. Ennis, the largest town and county seat of Clare (6,000), has a somewhat lower percentage than is usual for towns of its size in Ireland. In fact, Clare's figures, 60 per cent and 30 per cent in those age grades, are better even than those for such a metropolis as Cork City, with 68 per cent and 40 per cent.

Correlations of occupation and marital status[5] support the assumption that the longest delay in marriage is found among the small farmers. Both agricultural laborers and town laborers marry younger and in greater numbers proportionately. No other occupational class, not even the professional class, delays marriage so long or has so many celibate members.

These facts obviously relate themselves to the population decline. They are, as it were, two different symptoms of the same condition. But strangely enough in a declining population, fecundity is very high. Although there are fewer married women of childbearing age per 1,000 inhabitants than in other countries (74 in Ireland, 142 in the United States, 125 in Germany, 112 in Denmark, 121 in England, and 119 in Italy), the fertility of these women is remarkably high. For every 100 married women under 45, there are 131 children under five years of age, compared with only 77 in the United States, 71 in England, 93 in Denmark, and 75 in Germany. The number of children is higher again in western counties of Ireland than in eastern. The women of Clare under 45 produced 140 children for every 100 married women, those of Donegal 152, but in County Dublin and County Wicklow, the two eastern counties, only 122 and 124. In spite of this great fecundity there is, however, in Ireland only a normal proportion of children under 15, if Ireland is compared to other countries. The

[5] *Census of Population, 1926*, vol. V, part II: Ages and Conjugal Conditions.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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balance between high fertility and few and late marriages keeps their number down.

The kernel of the problem lies, of course, in the behavior of the country people. Marriage brings both dispersal of the farm family and change of status for boys and girls. The marriage of one of the sons brings re-formation of the whole family group upon the farm. The crux of the matter lies in this reorganization of the farm family and the mechanism of the change and continuity it provides.

The nearly universal form of marriage in the Irish countryside unites transfer of economic control, land ownership, reformation of family ties, advance in family and community status, and entrance into adult procreative sex life. It is a central focus of rural life, a universal turning point in individual histories. This form of marriage is known as matchmaking. It is the usual, in fact until recently the only respectable, method of marriage and usually too of inheritance.

In Figure 12 the reader will find a graphic representation of the description of the movement of the family and the re-formation of relations which the match involves and which is the burden of this chapter. It explains itself, and it gives a very good illustration of the generalities. Organicists should take heart at its resemblance to an amoeba expanding and budding. But the resemblance is accidental. The examples we cite come nearly all from County Clare, but literary references and interviewing in other places have been made to show that matchmaking prevails almost universally among small farmers with very little local modification. It is furthermore imbedded in the Irish (Gaelic) tongue and very old in Irish history.

A match (Gaelic, *cleamhnas*, marriage, and *spré*, a match) is a contractual marriage made by the parents or families of the marrying parties and involving the disposal of properties. Generally it begins with a farmer's casting round for a

1 [i.e., that of population decline.—Analyst]

CHAPTER IX

The Problem of the Aged

888 THE small farmers of the Irish countryside have a characteristic way of treating differences among themselves that is based upon relationships fundamental in the organization of their communities. Naturally these folkways are connected with the norms of family life. Perhaps the most important of them is their treatment of differences in age.

162 888 Ireland is in some ways an old person's country. The percentages of the old in the population are very high. Naturally the fact is closely allied to an emigration which until recently has drained the country of its young adult manhood and womanhood. And, as in the case of emigration and late marriage, it is the rural districts, or better, the small farmers who inhabit them, that set the norm for the whole country.

A comparison of the distribution of age groups over the population between aggregate rural areas and aggregate town areas, as made in the 1926 census,[1] shows the case clearly. For the whole Free State at that time there are 671 males per 10,000 males aged sixty-five to seventy-four in the aggregate rural areas, while in the aggregate town areas there are only 402 per thousand of that age. The proportions of females of this age to total females are higher

[1] *Census of Population, 1926*, vol. V, pt. I: Ages, Orphanhood and Conjugal Conditions.

[4, 158]

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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in both cases, but they show much the same relationship. In both sexes the number of old people is greater in the country districts. Conversely, of course, the country districts show a smaller number of people of adult years. Among males the country areas in the aggregate for the whole of the Free State count only 1,115 per 10,000 aged thirty-five to forty-four, while the towns count 1,234 per 10,000 in the same adult age group.

When the various county rural areas are subjected to internal comparisons, similar proportions of old and young appear. To give only one example, County Clare counts 752 per 10,000 males aged sixty-five to seventy-four in the aggregate rural areas of the county, but only 528 per 10,000 of the same age in the aggregate of the county's towns. Likewise, Meath, a county of the midland "ranching" area, shows a proportion between rural and urban districts of 620 to 392; and Galway, in part a "congested area," a proportion of 723 to 547. Thus within counties from all parts of Ireland the same greater concentration of the old is found in the country districts.

One can remark immediately from the examples given above that there is a progression in the degree with which, for the counties mentioned, the numbers of old people of the age group selected range above or below the average number of their age per 10,000 males for the whole population of the Free State. This fact introduces us to a new consideration, corollary to the last. It is in general the poorer western counties, where small holders predominate, which have the larger number of aged individuals. Numbers per 10,000 males of the age we have selected before sixty-five to seventy-four rise regularly among the rural populations of the Irish counties from the 614 and 620 of Kilkenny and Meath to the 841 and 835 of Leitrim and Monaghan. In such a scale, the southwestern counties, such as Clare, are again in the middle, though Clare itself

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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with a count of 752 leans heavily toward the Leitrim side.

It becomes obvious that census records by age will all support the assumption. It is in the rural areas, and among the small farmers, that, relatively, the largest number of old people are to be found. Tables 2A and 2B [2] illustrate this conclusion graphically.

TABLE 2A

OLD PEOPLE IN IRELAND: RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN SELECTED COUNTIES

Census Area	Males per 10,000 aged 65–74
Free State (all counties)	
Aggregate rural areas	671
Aggregate urban areas	402
Clare	
Aggregate rural areas	752
Aggregate urban areas	528
Meath	
Aggregate rural areas	620
Aggregate urban areas	393
Galway	
Aggregate rural areas	723
Aggregate urban areas	547

TABLE 2B

OLD PEOPLE IN IRELAND: SELECTED COUNTIES SHOWING MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM IN AGGREGATE RURAL AREAS

Census Area	Males per 10,000 aged 65–74
Kilkenny	614
Meath	620
Clare	752
Monaghan	835
Leitrim	841

That the large proportion of old people is a matter of the agricultural community is very evident again when the figures indicating the age of those following the various occupations are examined. This is important in gauging

[2] Based on tables from *Census of Population, 1926*, vol. V, pt. I.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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the provision Irish society makes for its old members, for numerically they are a large group. Not only are there larger numbers of old people relatively to other adults in the countryside than in the towns and in agricultural pursuits *than in other* occupations, but also there are more of them absolutely. Thus out of 550,772 males engaged in agriculture, there was one in 14 of them, or 41,130, over seventy years of age. Among all other "producers, makers and repairers," who numbered 154,016, there were only 3,655 septuagenarian males, or one man in 50. Even among the more sedentary occupations of the towns, the occurrence of old men in commercial, financial, or insurance pursuits was only one in 56 and in professions only one in 75. The occupational figures show that the old are still active and numerous in agriculture. In other fields old people are far less numerous and the numbers of retired persons are greater.

It is only among one sort of agriculturalist, the farm holders and their helping relatives, that this fact is true. Naturally the numbers of the old are high in Ireland, where they represent the survivors of a numerically larger generation thinned much by emigration and where their relative number in the total population is increased by the absence of many men and women who could, without emigration, swell the ranks of the young adult age groups. Nevertheless, within the framework of these proportions, it is the farm-holding agricultural group which sets the norm. Expressing the same proportions in percentages, agriculture counts among its male followers 9 per cent — holders and relatives assisting them — who are over seventy years of age. No other group exhibits such a percentage. The only other occupations to show any similar longevity or length of service are "makers of apparel and made-up textile goods" with 6 per cent of their number still engaged after the age of seventy. All others range much lower in percentage of aged individuals still occupied.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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The relatively great preponderance of the old in agriculture does not extend to the agricultural laborers. They number only 2 per cent of males over seventy. It is only among the farmers and farmers' relatives assisting them that so many old people are alive and active.

It becomes even more evident that it is the farm population which sets the norm for Ireland in this regard when we compare figures of this sort with those of the total population. In all Ireland 6.7 per cent of males are over seventy years of age. Those in the adult years twenty-five to twenty-nine and thirty to thirty-four number only 9.2 per cent and 8.0 per cent of the total males. The farm population with percentages of 8.4 and 8.0 in those ages is the only occupational group to show figures below those of the total population. All others rise above the average percentages for the whole country. Naturally it is the absolutely greater numbers of the farm population which weight the averages. Yet, understanding this, we must also understand that it is among the farm population that the norm is determined.

Statistics for females present rather different ratios. They need not detain us, as they are complicated by the inclusion of a larger category entitled "those engaged in home duties." The category embraces the greater number of urban women and makes comparison with farm women by occupation somewhat precarious. On the other hand, it has the merit of grouping them about household duties and provides in itself a good distinction between urban and rural household workers. Comparing them, then, we find 12 per cent of female farmers and relatives helping farmers over seventy, and of this 5 per cent and 8 per cent aged thirty to thirty-four and thirty-five to forty-four. (We choose here ages in which most of the women who marry are already married.) But among the women "engaged in home duties" (the category which embraces most townswomen, as well as unspecified numbers of countrywomen), only 4.4 per cent are over seventy, and

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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conversely the more numerous 11 per cent and 23 per cent are thirty to thirty-four and thirty-five to forty-four. The total female population shows percentages of 8.3 per cent over seventy and 8 per cent and 15 per cent in the younger age grades. It can be seen how these comparisons bear out the conclusions presented by those of the males. It is among the farm population that the largest number of old people are to be found. In this regard the farmers again set the norm for Ireland.

The largest proportions of the aged among the farmers prevail, furthermore, among the small farmers. One can expect this fact, related as it is to the greater emigration of this class. The statistics correlating the size of the farm and age group proportions bear out the expectation.

Table 3, based again upon census records,[3] expresses the relative percentages of males over seventy years of age and of males thirty to forty-four (the age groups in which emigration comes to an end) in the total of males ranked by age among farmers and farmers' assisting relatives upon the various sizes of farms, for the whole of the Free State:

TABLE 3

OLD AGE AND SIZE OF FARMS

Farm Size in Acres	Percentage of Farmers and Assisting Relatives over 70 Years of Age	Percentage of Farmers and Assisting Relatives Aged 30–44
1–5	15	10
5–10	12	15
10–15	10	11
15–30	9	12
30–50	8	12
50–100	7½	10
100–200	7	16
200–over	1	24

The table reveals a constant diminution of the percentage of the old as the size of farms increases. In other words, the

[3] *Census of Population, 1926*, vol. V, pt. II, Table 7.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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smaller the farm the greater the likelihood that it supports old people. Since we are dealing with census records of occupations actually engaged in at the time of numeration, the figures again point to the fact that larger proportions of old people are still active upon the small farms than elsewhere. On the small farms, then, the old do not retire. That there should be no constant increase in the percentages of the adult age groups does not detract from the validity of the conclusion. The inconsistency of the percentages can be referred to the differential emigration rates of the inhabitants of farms of various sizes. If emigration takes place at different ages and in greater or less proportions from different-sized farm holdings, as other figures not germane in this connection point out, that fact will make it impossible to select any one age group to illustrate the corresponding increase of the proportion of adult males to aged males in the farm size categories.

The table confirms the point. It is among the small holders that the greatest number of old people survive. The peasant population is again responsible for a striking peculiarity of Irish demography.

That the peculiarity is a peasant manifestation can be demonstrated upon a narrower stage. In the various counties of the Free State, the same statistical differences appear between rural areas and small holdings on one hand and urban areas and large holdings on the other. Old people are relatively numerous in the former, relatively few in the latter. In Clare, to take one example, we have seen already that the aggregate rural areas count a larger proportion of the old than do the aggregate urban areas (towns of 1,500 or more inhabitants). The Clare rural districts in which larger holdings are more numerous, Meelick and Ballyvaughan, count 2.4 per cent and 3.1 per cent respectively of their people over seventy-five, both male and female. Those in which larger holdings are relatively fewer, e.g., Tulla and

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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Ennistymon, count larger percentages (4.6 and 4.0 respectively). Here again, within the bounds of the county, the demographic peculiarity by which the old are so numerous is a characteristic of the small-farm population. The presence of large farmers in any district is enough to weigh proportions away from the peasant norm. Comparisons of occupations by age within the county yield the same result. We need not detail them here.[4]

The demographic peculiarity which gives Ireland so large a proportion of the aged in her population becomes more marked when other nations are compared. The Irish death rate is rather low. Most strikingly, only one civilized country keeping census records of age distribution surpasses Ireland in the large proportion of aged individuals. That country is France, which in 1926 counted 9.4 per cent of its citizens over sixty-five years of age, barely topping the Irish figure of 9.2 per cent. Other countries ranged far below France and the Free State, Scandinavian and Baltic countries coming comparatively near, with such figures as that of 8.8 per cent for Sweden and 7.6 per cent for Norway. Industrial Germany and England (with Wales) occupied a middle place with figures of 5.7 per cent and 6.6 per cent respectively, and such "new" countries as Australia and the United States, where the percentages are 4.4 per cent and 4.7 per cent, brought up the rear. These figures (see Table 4) were taken from national censuses of various dates in the various countries in the period 1920–1926 and compiled for the Irish census primarily from the "International Health Year Book 1928 (League of Nations)" and *Aperçu de la démographie des divers pays du monde, 1925* (International Institute of Statistics).

Ireland and France share eminence as abodes of the old. But they reach that eminence through different courses. A comparison of the expectancy of life in the two countries,

[4] *Census of Population, 1926*, vol. V, pt. II, Table 12A, County Clare.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

162 made upon the basis of actuarial computations at the time
165 of the taking of the census in the Free State, reveals this difference. In addition, it reveals a new factor in the question of age distribution in Ireland. At all ages from birth

TABLE 4

PERSONS OVER SIXTY-FIVE IN IRELAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES

Country	Population Percentage
France	9.4
Ireland	9.2
Sweden	8.8
Norway	7.6
England (with Wales)	6.6
Germany	5.7
Australia	4.4
United States	4.7

to eighty, the expectation of life is considerably higher in the Free State than in France. At five (a better age than that of birth to take for purposes of computation because of infant mortality) the Irishman may look forward to fifty-nine years of life, the Frenchman only to fifty-five. At forty he may expect to live thirty-eight years more to the Frenchman's thirty-five. And at eighty, if they both survive so long, the Irishman may hope to outlive the Frenchman by more than a year, their expectancies being at that age 5.8 and 4.3 respectively. As Ireland shows a very high expectation of life at all ages in comparison with other countries, especially for males (the female expectancies being considerably lower), the combination of this fact with her large proportion of old people leads to a new conclusion. Not only are the old in Irish country districts relatively more numerous, but they are absolutely more numerous since they live longer than in other countries. Consequently, whatever conditions produce the large percentage of old people among the total population in France, they are not

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

those of Ireland. There low life expectancies go hand in hand with a large proportion of the aged. In Ireland high expectancies, especially at older ages, where they are among the highest in the world for both sexes, go hand in hand with the same phenomenon.

For this reason one cannot appeal too directly to emigration as the determinant of the demographic condition. The Irish countryside is relatively full of old people, not only because so many of the young adults have left, but also because the old people tend to live long lives.

Within this complexity of factors, emigration, a high percentage of the old, and late marriage, the small farmers set the norms for the whole country. Now we can recognize that high expectancies of life also belong to them. A comparison of life expectancies among the three provinces of the Free State will suffice to bear out the fact. Males of Connacht can expect more years of life at all ages than males of Munster; the males of Munster can expect more than those of Leinster; and those of Leinster can expect least of all three. Thus the provinces show higher expectancies the smaller their farms.

Many causes have been advanced to account for Irish longevity. The country people live long and die often very old indeed. Diet, climate, natural selection through infant mortality, racial heredity, have all been suggested by various writers. Probably all of these factors are involved, in one way or another, but the problem is one that has faced students of peasantries often.

The authors have no single efficient cause to offer. The question that poses itself for them is one of effect rather than of cause. The existence of such a large proportion of the old among small farmers presents a problem in the organization of behavior among human beings. Nevertheless, might not the longevity of peasants be after all a simple matter? In the Irish case we shall see that they live long

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

CHAPTER XI

Familism and Sex

162 834 THE small farmers' treatment of sex and the relations of men and women is no less characteristic of their communities than is their treatment of age differences. The country people are the ones among whom marriage is latest in Ireland, bachelorhood and spinsterhood most common, fecundity greatest. They are the ones among whom there is an excess of males over females, a fact which gives all Ireland a sex ratio (973 females to every 1,000 males) unexampled among the long-settled Old World countries and comparable only to those of the new countries. Yet the best evidence gives them a comparatively low illegitimacy rate, too, and the country people yield to no one in the strictness of their sexual morality.

562 834 In the small farm households of the countryside, the roles, privileges, and duties of male and female are complementary. The division of labor between the sexes is only part of separation of human activity into male and female spheres. By oriental standards, perhaps, physical segregation of the sexes may be lacking. Yet in the countryside the community sets very rigid norms of conduct regulating the relations between men and women.

Indeed, the bounds of propriety among the small farmers are quite well marked. An outsider can come to see something of them almost at once. Men and women are much more often to be seen in the company of members of their

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

lands of the area made up of this parish and the contiguous parishes are the townlands from which marriages have moved brides outward. These same higher and more westerly townlands are also the ones that have lost population fastest and have been marked by the highest rates of celibacy. Since 1860, at least, families of this area have consistently paid higher dowries to establish their girls on better lands nearer urban and shopping centers. These families have married their daughters along the country roads downward and eastward, from the higher, poorer, more westwardly townlands to the better lands in lower and more eastwardly ones. Relatively speaking, there has been no movement of brides in a reverse direction. By comparison with the better lands, the poorer farms have done without brides for their young men. These poorer farms are the ones, then, who have seen their families "die out of it."

This is merely the evidence from one small parish and its neighbors. But it is instructive that it corresponds with the picture for Ireland as a whole, as the marital statistics of the censuses reveal it. Late marriage, celibacy, the marked preponderance of males in the sex ratio, are all phenomena of the western and poorer farming districts of the country.

Neither the establishment of a peasant proprietorship in the years of agrarian reform since the Land War nor the remarkable growth of prosperity among the farmers since the nadir of famine times has had any success in reversing the long-persistent trend of population decline in the countryside. They have had no effect either, it seems, upon the demographic phenomena associated with that decline. Perhaps the reason for the persistence of the trend despite all changes lies in the considerations revealed by the study of the matter in one small parish, as we have just described them. The acquisition of better lands, the growth of a greater rural prosperity, and the opening up of new opportunities at home have gone hand in hand with a persistence

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

It has already been pointed out that the census figures available at the time of the fieldwork on which this book is based are those of the Irish census of 1926. Since that time some at least of the figures based on the succeeding decennial census, that of 1936, have become available. There are also a number of annual statistics which bear on the questions of Irish population. It is interesting to turn to these for the light they throw on subsequent development in the trends we have noted.

The release of the 1936 census figures in 1939 showed conclusively that the demographic trends that have marked Ireland since Famine times continue to persist. Neither the years of the establishment of the Free State up to 1932 nor the years of depression, economic war, and the experimental programs of the De Valera regime since then have affected the trends. Any of the charts prepared for the 1926 figures needs only to be extrapolated along the trend line a few points to show the situation of ten years later.

Stated briefly, these trends recapitulate and reëmphasize the points we have already made. Emigration continues to mark the life of the country, draining the countryside first into the towns and second overseas, now to Great Britain rather than across the oceans. Ireland continues to hold its record of possessing the highest percentage of unmarried men and women in the world. The population over sixty-five years of age continues to rise. The population of children continues to fall. Marriages continue to be fertile, by comparison with many other countries. But they still tend to become fewer and fewer, and the delay of marriage into middle life grows longer and longer. The ratio of females to males continues to fall, until in 1936 there were 975 males for every 935 females in Ireland, the lowest sex ratio in Europe and one of the lowest in the world.

These figures mark the continued existence of the familistic order we have discussed. They mark as well the continuance of its struggle to fit modern life. Perhaps a figure

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

are also characteristically rural still today. These are gamekeepers, race-horse trainers, and jockeys. These are, of course, employees of the landed gentry who follow the cult of the horse. They are more often to be found now in the eastern midland counties than elsewhere today.

In County Clare rural occupations other than agricultural are equally rare. There the figures necessitate a slightly different definition of rural districts, since certain towns smaller than 1500 possessing local self-government are included in the town areas. But, by the same procedure as before, we can divide the proportions of total population into rural population in the county and then classify the occupations in Clare according to their rural or urban character.

In Clare, of course, there are no very large cities. The county counts 5,023 males and 5,522 females in town districts, and the overwhelming majority are country dwellers as one would expect in the agricultural west. The total rural districts in 1926 numbered 45,048 male inhabitants and 39,471 female. As befits a largely agricultural area such as the county, occupations and industries show a little different distribution. The population is for males 89 per cent rural and for females 88 per cent rural. Those gainfully occupied in rural districts number for males well over two-thirds of the total population, for females only one-fifth of the total, so that for men, at least, the numbers recorded as unoccupied are negligible. The low figure for occupied females is due to the inclusion of housewives among the unoccupied. The rural-urban ratio upon which we can build expectancies of proportions of followers of occupations to be found in towns or countryside is 92 per cent for males and 84 per cent for females. As for the whole country, female occupations are found only in the towns.

The table for Clare (Table 6) repeats practically exactly the same story as that for Ireland as a whole. In fact, the

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

369 In the search for the countryman, one can break
241 through census records and production figures to find him pursuing his daily and annual round.

The task is simplified immensely by the fact that in 1926 the Free State Government undertook a complete census of the country. In the tables prepared there, the countrymen distinguish themselves in a variety of ways. They are the most numerous group in the country. Out of nearly three million inhabitants, one million eight hundred thousand, or 63 per cent, live in rural areas, outside cities and towns. Not all these country-dwellers are farmers,
241 of course, but the vast majority are. Fifty-one per cent of all occupied persons, male and female, in southern Ireland work at agriculture.

But these agriculturalists are not all alike, of course. Distinctions appear among them which are important to an understanding of the countryman. For example, the farms on which they work differ widely in size. Relative proportions of small and large farms vary with different parts of the country, but nevertheless small farms predominate in all Ireland. A farm over 200 acres is a rarity, comparatively speaking; most of them do not reach 100 acres. Thirty or fifty acres is the average size.

When one looks at the numbers of people these farms support, however, the small holdings come forward much more strongly. There are many more persons supported upon farms under thirty acres

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

We referred in the first paragraph to sand and gravel: the white shell sand is taken for manure and is also strewn on the kitchen floor, while beach stones and gravel find many uses as cobble stones, pebble-dashing and so on. Among other by-products of the sea we must not forget fish-oil, manufactured not only as a medicine for cattle but also as an illuminant. The iron crusie lamp (Fig. 105) was not long since the chief source of light in the islands, and until half a century ago large sea-shells are said to have been employed for the purpose in Co. Kerry. The wick of the crusie was a peeled rush or a twist of cotton: because of the strong smell the lamp was hung under the chimney so that the draught carried away the fumes. The abundant sea shells are also utilized for lime on some islands, for example Tory, by burning them in a kiln made of turf.

Fig. 105. Length 15"

Finally, we must not omit the dread harvest of the sea cast up after storms—the timber and food-stuffs and wreckage—always welcome and perhaps in olden days not uninvited. Many an islandman's cabin is roofed with couples of ships' masts, and a visit to treeless Tory or Rathlin will reveal the many uses to which drift timber is put. Mysterious objects brought by the currents from the West Indies occasionally turn up: pumice, perhaps from this source, has been found, treasured no doubt as a magic stone, in sandhill settlements of 4,000 years ago.

It is not to be wondered at, when we consider the ancient and varied, if often toilsome and dangerous life of the Irish shores, that the coasts carry a much denser population than districts inland. It should be stressed that these various activities are carried on not as a rule by specialized fishermen but by farmers and peasants to whom the sea offers an accessory source of life and interest, and who often perpetuate the old communal schemes by taking shares in a boat and nets. Old ways die hardest by the sea; prohibitions and superstitions are rife, and fishing is one of the few occupations in which women take no active part.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

ages. He sees the country taking complete possession of the town, blocking its streets, ignoring its traffic: he is in the presence of a force older and more fundamental than the town which has given it hospitality (Fig. 110).

When we inquire into the origins and antiquity of the Irish towns we find that very few go back to pre-Norman times, while it is abundantly clear that periodic gatherings in "temporary towns" are far older. The pre-Christian fortress-palaces such as Tara and Navan did not survive into historic times, and as a rule the church in Celtic lands had no civic interests, though many a confiscated monastic site was revived as the nucleus of a town when occupied by English troops in the 16th century. Some coastal cities such as Dublin and Waterford were founded by Norsemen, but most of the inland towns grew up as castle-market-towns during the Anglo-Norman period or in the plantations of the 16th and 17th centuries. To-day the five chief seaports, none of them strictly "native," contain one quarter of the total population: very few inland towns have more than 10,000 people, and only one of these is outside the industrial Six Counties. Most of the fair centres have a population of from 500 to 5,000: there are 187 towns of this size in Eire. There are 202 "towns" with from 200 to 500 inhabitants and only 25 with more than 5,000 (Fig. 107).

It is to these small towns, scattered at convenient intervals of 10 or 15 miles up and down the country, that the fairs have been attracted, the centre of authority and administration becoming the centre of exchange. Although most of the settlements are of "foreign" origin, they have become thoroughly Irish. The family system and blood-ties link up town and country, and trade follows the personal bond of "friendship," that is, blood relationship, however remote. Over shops and inns it is family names one sees painted up: O'Flynn and Flanagan take the place of the English "General Stores" and "Red Lion." Since the countryman's money comes only at the periodic fairs, he relies on the shopkeeper's credit, and the debt must never be entirely paid off, for that

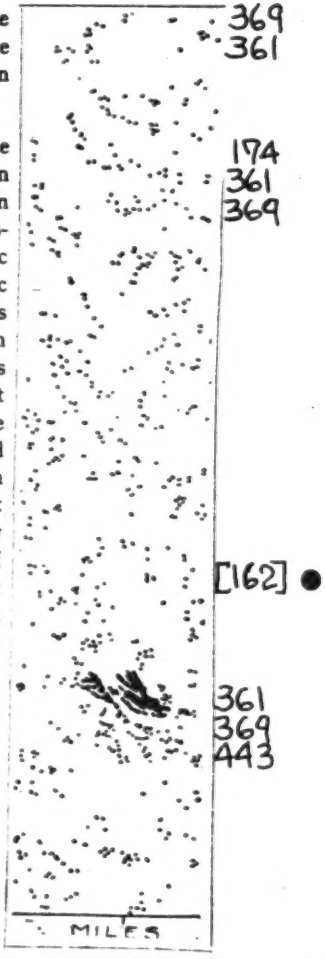

Fig. 107.
A market town with scattered country population. Each dot represents a building.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

361 would "spoil" social relations. Even in the larger towns the
[369] shopkeeper is reluctant to have his bills completely settled by
[443] his customers. These personal ties readily give rise to cliques and municipal corruption: it must be admitted that the

IRELAND
DENSITY OF
MODERN POPULATION
Scale 1:4,000,000
Reference to shading
Over 512 inhabitants to sq. mile
From 256 - 512 " " "
" 128 - 256 " " "
" 64 - 127 " " "
Less than 64 " " "
George Philip & Son, Ltd.

Fig. 108.

corporate spirit is poorly developed. Similarly the Irish
country town is generally lacking in any native traditions of
[344] civic architecture, and even the splendid buildings of Dublin and Galway together with the distinctive court-houses of smaller towns owe much to outside influence. The small

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

town consists of streets of houses of peasant style strung end to end, picturesque with their washes of many colours, but perpetuating and even accentuating the filth which can be tolerated in a village setting of streams and fields but which becomes highly objectionable under urban conditions. On the other hand there are some spaciously-planned country towns which have an air of quiet opulence reminding one of the English heritage to which they owe their foundation. I am aware that in saying this I am ignoring the " inner flame " of the Irish towns, but it cannot be denied that externally they have much to learn from the older civic traditions of the sister isle. Dr. Arensberg has analysed the pattern of the country town and described it as " an extension townwards of the countryman's own social order." He shows that, until recent times, its economy has been that of distribution, not production. Banks and pubs and shops do most of the business and owing to the family system " Ireland is better supplied with shops, at least in number, than any comparable European nation." If we exclude the Lough Neagh basin, all the denser areas of population are coastal and most of the country's manufacturing industries are concentrated in the ports (Fig. 108).

To return to the fair, we have tried to show how the periodic gatherings in which they originated were associated with ritual and emotional experiences connected with the celebration of recurring events such as seed-time and harvest. Breaking the routine of toil, it is characteristic that much licence was permitted on these occasions. Until recent times a strong spirit of revelry and a temporary slackening of the moral code distinguished the great Irish fairs. Even to-day the police or civic guards make allowances for fair day and turn a blind eye to many offences against the law: it is recognized as a time of special licence. Games, dancing and faction fights were the order of the day once the buying and selling were over. Until a generation ago cruel "knuckle-dusters " (Fig. 109) were carried in readiness, and the countryman's heavy felt hat was worn as a defence against the

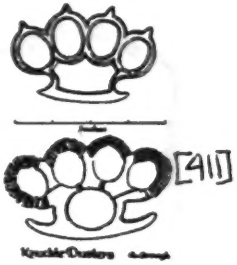

Fig. 109.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

The distribution of population, inhabited houses, and out-buildings in 1891, was as follows:— 162 592

Islands.	Area.	Population.			Houses.	Outbuildings and Farmsteadings.
		Persons.	Males.	Females.		
	A. R. P.					
Inishbofin, .	2312 1 16	874	450	424	194	123
Inishshark, .	581 1 30	123	61	62	28	14
54 other islands,	257 3 35	—	—	—	—	—
Totals, . .	3151 3 1	997	511	486	*222	137

It will be seen that the male population exceeds the female by 95, the cause evidently being the greater emigration of females than of males. 162 167

The drain does not seem to have affected any one class of the males (as regards age) more than another, as the number of men between the ages of 20 and 60 is 203, or slightly more than one-fifth of the whole population.

Since the census was taken some slight change has occurred, for, according to a return obtained on the islands, there are now 186 families on Inishbofin, and 26 on Inishshark, being a loss of three families since 1891. A larger number of young people than usual is also said to have emigrated since then. Many of the older men state that emigration has taken away the finest men from the islands, especially Inishshark, and say that formerly the stature of the men was greater than it is now. I must say, however, that those of the elder generation still remaining are not as a rule better built or taller than their sons and grandsons. [142]

(B.) *Acreage and Rental.*—The total area is, as stated above, 3151 acres, the valuation of which, including houses, land, &c., is £572 6*s.* A very considerable proportion of the surface of the islands is commonage, the exact amount and distribution of which I am enabled 423 311 [495]

* Of these, 215 were inhabited.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

In 1891 there were only nine holdings, with a rating of over £4 to £10, ninety-six with ratings between £2 and £4, and thirty-six at, or under, £2. 423 311 [435]

(c.) *Language and Illiteracy—Language.*—All the inhabitants (with the exception of a very few old people, most of whom live in Inishshark) now speak English, but their vocabulary does not seem to be very extensive. To a very large extent they speak Irish among themselves, but many of the children and young people have little or no acquaintance with the language. Irish is most spoken in Inishshark, which is less in communication with the outer world than Inishbofin. 191

It is much to be regretted that, as no return of the Irish-speaking districts by parishes is made by the census authorities, the proportion of those speaking Irish alone, and Irish and English, cannot be given here.

Illiteracy.—The population of the parish of Inishbofin of five years of age and upwards was, in 1891, 895, of whom 415, or 46·4 per cent. were illiterate :— 212 162

	Persons.	Male.	Female.
Number above 5 years,	895	457	438
Illiterate, . . .	415	202	213
Percentage, . .	46·4	44·2	48·6

Of the 480 who could read, 348 persons, 188 males, and 160 females could read and write, the remaining 132, 67 males, and 65 females, or more than a quarter of the whole, could read only. The rate of illiteracy is higher, as might be expected, among the females than the males, and probably is greater in Inishshark than Inishbofin.

(D.) *Longevity.*—Though the people do not seem to reach any very great age, yet they may be said to be fairly long-lived. According to the census of 1891 there were on the islands 27 persons, 10 males and 17 females of over 75 years of age, of whom there were— 145 162

Aged 75 and under 80, 1 male and 3 females,
,, 80 ,, 85, 5 males and 14 females,
,, 85 ,, 90, 4 ,, 0 ,,

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

175 a system of dioceses and raised St. Patrick's Church at Armagh
[195] to the primacy in the eleventh century.

But it was the Norsemen who established the first port-cities
175 of Ireland—Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork and Limerick—
162 and provided the Anglo-Normans with bases from which to attempt their conquest. It was the fate of these newcomers, as of earlier invaders, to be absorbed, but the towns which they and their successors established became the instruments of Anglicization. Yet outside the nine south-eastern counties where the Anglo-Norman influence was strongest, there are few towns which are older than the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and as late as 1841 less than 15 per cent of the Irish population was urban. It is significant that even today no inland Irish town has a population reaching 20,000: in the Republic, indeed, only one or two exceed 10,000, and that barely. It is the immemorial peasant tradition which dominates the heart of Ireland. In some inland counties the rural population is still as much as 90 per cent of the total: for the Republic of Ireland as a whole it amounts to 62 per cent, and the figure for the more industrialized counties of Northern Ireland is only slightly under 50 per cent. In Ulster the plantation of English and especially of Scots Presbyterian settlers in the seventeenth century was at last successful in maintaining its identity, though as we shall see the material culture is strongly moulded to its Irish environment. Partly because this region of entry has received through the centuries almost every culture-layer that has been deposited in Ireland, there is perhaps a greater variety of survivals in Ulster than in any other part of Ireland. In some ways this most British part of Ireland is also the most Irish.

311 Although the tribal nomadism of medieval Ireland has been
361 exaggerated, there can be no doubt that the pastoral tradition
175 has dominated Irish life through the ages. Cultivation was certainly practised from Neolithic times, but the older crops, wheat and barley, were in course of time supplemented and in many parts replaced by oats, which became the corn of Ireland as of Scotland, food for men as well as animals. For half the year the arable land was under stubble, pastured and manured by grazing stock, so that the favoured acres around the settle-

15: Fox E-5 (1962) 1963 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Tory Island

[P. 155, A]

TABLE I

Name type	West Town	East Town	Total
551 611 184			
m + *Fa*	24	25	49
f + *Fa*	26	16	42
m + *Mo*	13	4	17
f + *Mo*	6	4	10
m + *Fa*+ *FaFa*	15	5	20
f + *Fa*+ *FaFa*	13	4	17
m + *Mo*+ *MoMo*	0	0	0
f + *Mo*+ *MoMo*	0	0	0
m + *Fa*+ *FaMo*	0	3	3
f + *Fa*+ *FaMo*	2	1	3
m + *Mo*+ *MoFa*	0	3	3
f + *Mo*+ *MoFa*	0	1	1
m + *MoMo*	2	1	3
m + *MoFa*	3	1	4
f + *MoFa*	1	0	1
f + *Fa*+ *FaFa*+ *FaFaFa*	3	0	3
f + *FaFa*+ *FaFaFa*	0	1	1
f + *FaBro*	0	1	1
m + *MoMo*+ *MoMoFa*+ *MoMoFaMo*	3	0	3
f + *MoMo*+ *MoMoFa*+ *MoMoFaMo*	1	0	1
	112	70	182

551 611 Table II summarizes the 'laterality preference' as it affects men and women respectively.

TABLE II

	Patrilateral	*Matrilateral*	*Total*
m	72 (70·6 *per cent.*)	30 (29·4 *per cent.*)	102
f	67 (83·75 *per cent.*)	13 (16·25 *per cent.*)	80
Total	139 (76·4 *per cent.*)	43 (23·6 *per cent.*)	182

The figures in parenthesis are percentages of the row totals.

The overall preference is, as we have seen, patrilateral, but there is an interesting minority preference amongst males for matrilateral names. Practically a third of the men and less than a sixth of the women have matrilateral names.[7] There are several explanations for this trend amongst males. It may stem from the large number of widows with sons, or from the name continuity of the descent system. In a number of cases it follows from the fact that a man is given his father's Christian name as his own and hence takes his mother's name to distinguish him, although this is not all that common.

[162]

182

551 611 Such a highly personalized naming system only works within the particularistic boundaries of a small community.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

Introduction

INIS BEAG is a fictitious name for one of the many inhabited islands of the Irish Gaeltacht.[1] It is a rocky, barren protuberance in the ocean, buffeted constantly by wind and storm, where 350 hardy people eke out a meager existence. This tiny island is renowned not only for the distinctive folk culture possessed by its inhabitants, but for its numerous, well-preserved antiquities which attest to at least 5000 years of almost continuous human habitation, and its great beauty of land and seascape. During the past 150 years, first scientists, then writers, and more recently film, radio, and television producers have visited Inis Beag, and their many works have served to familiarize the world with the culture, albeit romanticized, of the islanders. As a result of literary publicity, which commenced in the first decade of this century, increasing numbers of tourists have been drawn to Inis Beag over the years. The cultural forms which are most publicized and attract the most attention from tourists are the traditional garb of the folk, their skill in rowing the famed canoe, called *curach*, the manner in which they manufacture soils and grow in them a variety of crops, and their Gaelic speech.

My wife and I were introduced to Inis Beag during a short visit to Ireland in 1955, when we viewed the island from the nearby coast and talked of its cultural past and present with scholars in Dublin, Cork, and Galway. Between 1955 and 1958, we immersed ourselves in writings pertaining to Irish history and culture, and during the three summer months of the latter year we visited several peasant communities on the mainland and three islands, including Inis Beag, of the Gaeltacht. We made plans to come back to Inis Beag as soon as possible to undertake research, and in 1959 and 1960 we were able to spend the greater part of a year there, during which time we visited briefly on three occasions a neighboring island—Inis Thiar[2]—and several institutions on the mainland to conduct library and other research. We returned eight times to Inis Beag and Dublin for

[1] The Gaeltacht—areas in which 25 to 100 percent of the inhabitants speak Irish—embraces portions of 12 northern, western, and southern counties and a population of approximately 600,000 people (Freeman 1960:166).

[2] In Gaelic, Inis Thiar (also a fictitious name) means Western Isle, and Inis Beag is translated Little Isle.

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fostered immorality, and created mental illness on a vast scale. Primitive and folk peoples, according to this view, represent man as he once was and could or should be again were civilized society drastically reformed.

Most of the ideas held by primitivists are as extreme as those maintained by nativists: primitive and folk societies possess simple, static cultures in which dysfunctional forms are rare; their economies are primarily subsistence ones, approximate the householding type, and lack competitive elements; social control is mostly informal; the family is the core social group and is a highly integrated and cooperative unit; religion is a pervasive force which sanctions most behavior and assures psychological security and social cohesion; and, religious dissent and skepticism are unknown. Primitivists also contend that primitive and folk peoples are content with their conditions of life, are seldom if ever mentally ill, and possess character traits that civilization has perverted. It is probable that primitivists would include all of the traits designated as Irish by nativists and would add many others.

The antiquarians George Petrie and John T. O'Flaherty during the 1820s were the first scientists to undertake research in Inis Beag and the surrounding region. Since that time, there have been short and sporadic visits to the island by a variety of investigators, among them anthropologists, folklorists, geographers, historians, philologists, and others. Most of the anthropological research has been conducted by archeologists, anthropometricians, and linguists. Several archeological expeditions have examined thoroughly surface sites in Inis Beag, but no prehistorian has excavated as yet, and the accurate dating of artifacts scarcely has begun. Reconstruction of a number of ancient monuments by the government was made possible through the research findings of archeologists, and today site descriptions on mounted plaques mark the principal monuments. Alfred C. Haddon and C. R. Browne in 1892 and E. A. Hooton and C. W. Dupertius between 1932 and 1934 made anthropometric studies, the latter as part of the Harvard University anthropological survey of Ireland, which also included archeological and ethnographic investigations. The ethnographic study—reported in Conrad M. Arensberg's *The Irish Countryman* and Arensberg's and Solon T. Kimball's *Family and Community in Ireland*—was made in three communities of Co. Clare by these authors with W. Lloyd Warner; it was the first holistic ethnographic study made in Ireland, and my research in Inis Beag in its initial stages was only the third. (The second, by Rosemary Harris, is reported in a 1954 M.A. thesis in the University of London—see References.)

Linguists, as well as philologists and those wishing to learn Gaelic, long have visited Inis Beag. There now remain only a few areas along the western seaboard of Europe where Gaelic dialects still are spoken, and the island is located in one of these.[4] One-half the population of Ireland spoke the vernacular at the end of the eighteenth century, but by the middle of the last century the ratio had fallen to one-quarter, or approximately 1,500,000 speakers. Sixty years later the

[4] The Celtic languages are Gaulish, Goidelic, and Britannic, of which the first became extinct at the beginning of the medieval period, and the last two are represented today by the Irish and Scottish Gaelic dialects on the one hand, and the Breton and Welsh on the other. Two other related dialects are now extinct: Manx of the Isle of Man and Cornish, the British dialect of Cornwall (Dillon 1957:207).

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number was reduced to only 580,000. The great famine of 1845 to 1852 and the tide of emigration which followed brought about a rapid decline in the use of the language. In addition, the elementary school system was directed toward substituting English for Irish, and until 1922 instruction in most schools was given in the English tongue. It was reported in 1946 that only about 40,000 persons in the Republic used Gaelic as their true vernacular (Freeman 1960:166–169).

All Inis Beag folk of the age of eight years and older speak English as well as Irish, many with greater fluency than mainland peasants, for English is taught in the school and is spoken with Gaelic in homes where a realistic attitude toward emigration prevails. As in most of Ireland before 1922, English was employed as the medium of instruction in the school, and sermons in the church were delivered in English; even today the islanders confess to their priests in English—a fact little known. The widespread ability of the folk to use English is not readily apparent, however, for several reasons: the people are subsidized by the government to have their children learn Irish at school, and curates have urged, even threatened, that the foreign tongue not be spoken on moral and nativistic grounds; teachers have ridiculed English speech idiosyncracies of certain students and adult islanders before their pupils and, as a result, have induced shyness among the youth; the secretiveness of many persons and suspicion of outsiders of others prevent them from revealing their linguistic aptitudes to strangers; a few folk are nativists themselves and shun the use of English for that reason; and, finally, I have witnessed islanders "cod" (jokingly misinform) outsiders as to the true language situation.

The English speech of the islanders, as is common throughout rural Ireland, represents a syncretism of Gaelic and English forms; that is, English vocabulary is merged with Irish grammar, and Gaelic phonemes and speech rhythms influence English pronunciation. Irish terms commonly are incorporated into English speech, and, conversely, English words form an important part of the vocabulary of the folk when they employ the vernacular. Nativists are extremely critical of English vocabularly borrowings, a point of view not shared by the islanders; the latter are equally critical of the creation of new Gaelic terms by nativists for cultural innovations. The folk, among themselves, also are critical of the language revival movement, since most of their number must emigrate to English speaking countries where lack of mastery of the tongue places them at a competitive disadvantage. Irish speech is judged by nativists as "good" or "bad" according to at least three criteria: the prevalence of despised English words, the retention of traditional Gaelic terms, and the richness of Irish idiom. Many observers, including linguists, believe that the "best" Gaelic in Ireland is spoken in Inis Beag and nearby islands; however, my wife and I had visitors from the mainland who were declared to be more proficient Irish speakers than the island folk themselves by Inis Beag people who met and talked with them. In this case, probing revealed that the evaluation was based on our friends' mastery of idiomatic expression and clarity of pronunciation. The ability of the native speaker to combine accent and idiom is known as *blas*, and the folk can ascertain readily whether a stranger has learned Gaelic "from the cradle" or "at the school" (called "Christian Brothers' Irish" after teachers of that order).

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size from fourths to quarter-acres, located along the quarter that his community fronts. As a result of past inheritance and purchase, however, five Castle villagers own plots in one or two other quarters, as do five High and two Low villagers. Before field building commenced, the most extensive and fertile soils were found on the terraces; shallow and less widespread soils were situated just south of the terrace crest, while the back of the island was, and still is, mostly limestone pavement. Landholders originally were assigned equal acreage in each of these three areas, so that no one would have an advantage over his neighbors, and this pattern still predominates. The quarters are separated from one another by high, thick stone fences which run almost the length of Inis Beag, and, from west to east, they are known as Quarter of the *Phoillín* (derivation unknown), Quarter of the Ridge of Huts (after an ancient *clochán* settlement behind High Village), Quarter of the Castle, and Quarter of the Lake; they embrace, respectively, 271, 261, 240, and 263 acres.

Fifty-nine of the 71 householders in Inis Beag hold or own land, and one of these is an absentee holder. If an individual possesses four or fewer acres, he is regarded as landless—"a man of few gardens"—and 11 men are so designated. Two as yet unresolved disputes over the possession of land when resolved will add two other householders to the landless category, unless the property is divided in some manner among all four litigants by the Irish Land Commission. The folk prefer to rent rather than to own land, so that the commission will supervise matters relating to inheritance "fairly" and with little cost to the litigants should a dispute arise. The average sized Inis Beag holding is 15.7 acres, or approximately a croggery, and 25 islanders hold this amount of land; in addition, one person has 40 acres, three 32 acres, one 28 acres, eight 24 acres, eight 20 acres, four 12 acres, and nine 8 acres. Below is a chart summing up ownership data by village:

	Landholders and Owners	*Landless Householders*	*Average Sized Holding (in acres)*
Low Village	17	9	11.0
High Village	14	1	18.2
Castle Village	15	2	19.0
Terrace Village	13	1	16.4

The disproportionate number of landless persons in Low are, for the most part, either descendants of fisherfolk who centered in that community in earlier times and did not possess land, or siblings of landholders who chose not to emigrate. They support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing shops, and working for the government, among other pursuits.

Farming

There is neither legendary nor historical evidence of when soil building commenced in Inis Beag, but the process is an archaic one and is practiced in other communities along the Atlantic seaboard where appropriate seaweeds are available. Today, between 45 and 50 percent of the land surface of the island is

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The Village and the Family

Village Differences

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103 LOW VILLAGE RECEIVES ITS NAME from its position on the lowest terrace of Inis Beag (see Fig. 4). It borders the ocean and strand, while High Village to the east is located in a wide expanse south of the common land formed by a concavity in the upper terraces. On the western of the two promontories high above the beach, separated from Low and Terrace by rift valleys, is Castle Village. Below it are the cemetery enclosing the church of the patron saint and the new school, and above it are the castle, the ruined monastery, the Napoleonic watch
[138] tower, and what remains of the old school next to the tower. The Ordnance Survey
[823] Maps place the highest elevation of Inis Beag in the vicinity of the tower, but the folk claim that the most elevated portion of the crest is above High. Terrace Village, on the promontory to the east, presents a breath-taking view of the lake (see Fig. 7), the sound, and towering mountains and cliffs along the mainland coast. Low merges with High, but Castle and Terrace, because they are located on high terraces and bounded by rift valleys, are isolated units. Terrace is aligned north and south, but the other three settlements are aligned roughly east and west. The southernmost house of Terrace and the westernmost one of Low are approximately 1500 yards apart, and the intervening distance can be walked comfortably in less than 12 minutes.

Below are the number of inhabited houses and the population of each village:

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	Houses	*Population*
Low Village	24	119
High Village	16	59
Castle Village	17	99
Terrace Village	14	73

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521 203 571 is carried to the post office, for fear that the postmaster will open letters and talk publicly of their contents (or take money from them). It is customary for boys and young men to hide themselves in the darkness or behind fences in order to overhear conversations of passersby, or witness their misbehavior, which can be reported; this compels folk who move about after dark to conceal their faces and talk in whispers or low tones. When a person hidden in the darkness is accosted suddenly, he will vault a fence, run away, or crouch down and hide his face or draw a [574] raincoat over his head and shoulders to avoid being recognized. Most social events [512] and visiting take place after sundown, so that movements from one house to another will be unobserved.

626 Deviant behavior once learned of assures its perpetrators of becoming the focus of gossip and ridicule. But ridicule seldom is voiced in the presence of the victim; rather, he or she is told of it by relatives and acquaintances who have [538] witnessed or, more commonly, been told of it by others. My ballad not only took [539] advantage of the ubiquity of rumor, but its composition, aided and abetted by two dozen respondents, enabled me to discover the existence of a seldom revealed tradition of satirical balladry, common to the Irish, which has singled out for opprobrium many folk in the past. During three summer visits to Inis Beag following 1960, my wife and I were able to witness the singing of my song publicly. We learned that it, as others of its genre, is sung only before small gatherings, and whether or not it (or certain of its verses) is sung and by whom depends on [123] the makeup of the assembled group. Since ridicule is almost never expressed in the presence of its victim or his kin or close friends, we were able to gain information about kinship relations and factionalism by noting the juxtaposition of balladiers and audiences and which verses were sung.

Courtship and Marriage

582 589 162 Marriages are fewer and are entered into later in Ireland than in any other Western country. In 1951, approximately one-third of the men and one-quarter of the women in Ireland between the ages of 55 and 64 years had never married, while two-thirds of the men and two-fifths of the women between 25 and 34 years of age were single. Celibacy and age of marriage figures for Inis Beag approximate those for the rest of peasant Ireland. In a population of 350 persons, 116 are married; 13 are widows; 3 are widowers; and 33 males over 23 years of age and 21 females over 17 are single. Since marriage occurs between the ages of 24 and 45 years for men and 18 and 32 for women, based on statistics extending back to 1911, only 18 men and 9 women (excluding 3 women who, because of physical disabilities, probably never will marry) are eligible for marriage. Not only are 34.4 percent of the males bachelors and 22.6 percent of the females spinsters, but the average marriage age for men in the period 1951 to 1960 was 35.5 years and for women 24.8 (compared to an average for rural Ireland of 34.7 582 years for men and 28.7 for women in 1946). The age span between spouses married during the past half-century ranges from the husband being 21 years older than his wife to 4 years younger, but the average age span has been between 8 and 12 years for each of the five decades. The number of marriages per decade has been

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choosing. The kiss of the newly united pair, which in most of the Western world terminates the marriage ceremony, is lacking in Inis Beag, and after leaving the chapel the couple stand for some time in the yard to receive congratulations from guests and others who have attended the wedding, until the procession forms once again to walk to the home of the groom.

Once there, the groom's mother stands on the threshold and places the wedding cake for a moment on the head of her son, to compound the luck already gained by borrowed tie and shawl and donation of shillings. The newlyweds dance together alone before the first dance figure is formed, but they spend most of the night seated side by side, talking to well wishers, while music, song, and dance joyously abound in the adjoining kitchen. Presents are given the couple only by kin who have emigrated and by outsiders who have known the two long and well; the same tradition holds true at Christmas among older children and adults. The wedding party, as the *cleambnas*, may go on night after night, and so may the third party making up the marriage cycle a month later—the "dragging home," which is celebrated at the bride's former house. The term dragging home is employed when either the vernacular or English are spoken, but the word wedding, and its Irish equivalent *bainis*, are used interchangeably in both tongues. Although the bride must not enter her parents' house for a month after the nuptials, she is free to visit with them elsewhere.

The Family and Kinship

There are 79 inhabitable houses in Inis Beag, although many others of hoary vintage still stand and have been converted into outbuildings. Only 71 of these are lived in by the folk, however; 6 of the other 8 (1 of which houses the Dane) recently have been deserted by emigrants, and the remaining 2 are lived in by the curate and the headmaster. The following is a chart showing the categories of personnel occupying the 71 domiciles:

Number of Households	*Personnel*
30	Husband, wife, and offspring
5	Husband, wife, offspring, and the husband's widowed mother
4	Husband and wife who are childless
4	Husband, wife, offspring, and both parents of the husband
3	Husband, wife, offspring, and the husband's unmarried sister
2	Husband and wife who are childless and both parents of the husband
1	Husband, wife, offspring, and the husband's father who is a widower
1	Husband, wife, offspring, and both parents of the husband and his unmarried sister
1	Husband and wife whose offspring have emigrated
7	Widow and her unmarried offspring
5	Single man (bachelor)
2	Brother and sister both of whom are unmarried
2	Two brothers and a sister all of whom are unmarried
2	Widower and his unmarried offspring
1	Two bachelor brothers
1	Bachelor and his widowed sister-in-law

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Implicit in these statistics are such Irish phenomena as monogamy, the predominance of the nuclear family (Only 10.3 percent are extended in Inis Beag.), family exogamy, patrilocal residence, and a high incidence of celibacy. The last listed bachelor who lives with his widowed sister-in-law, and frequently is visited by a brother's adolescent grandson from the mainland, is regarded by many bachelors as fortunate—"He has a woman and a boy to work and no 'responsibilities.'"

Inheritance in the island is patrilineal, and before a man can marry, his father or widowed mother must "pass on" the property to him. To encourage aged men to surrender ownership of their land, a statute forbids their receiving the old age at 70 years until they have so acted. But despite this law, six Inis Beag elders aged 70 to 79 years—with a total of seven bachelor sons ranging in age from 32 to 47 years (not counting eight others who have emigrated but are eligible to inherit)—still maintain ownership themselves. When a man is without sons, he most commonly wills the land to a brother's son or arranges to have a man wed his daughter and "marry in" to the household. An in-marrying son-in-law, it is interesting to note, may pay a bride wealth, which usually is much larger than the dowry of the girl, for he has no land of his own. Among contemporary landholders, five have obtained property from uncles, six from widowed mothers, and two by marrying in. Other land in Inis Beag has been procured through purchase, exchange, gift-giving, and land dispute verdicts.

A major cause of celibacy, late marriage, disputes, and emigration related to the system of inheritance, seldom mentioned either in writings about Inis Beag or by the islanders, is the common practice of a father playing off his sons against one another for the patrimony in order to achieve favored treatment for his wife and himself in their waning years. Elders are well treated, in part as a result of the above and in part out of the fear that after death their ghosts will punish those who have maltreated them. Often the playing off of sons for the patrimony leads to factionalism within the family and may provoke a secretly favored son to emigrate or, more seriously, all sons acting in concert to depart in anger and disgust. Today, a total of 22 married men, widowers, and widows whose average age is 65.7, hold land that is inheritable by a total of 56 sons whose average age is 30.1 years. (The 16 elders who have a total of 20 sons in the island average 66.7 years of age and their offspring 33.6.) The uncertainty about which sibling will inherit is reflected in these figures: of the 59 present landholders, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and beyond.

Although the Inis Beag family is totally exogamous, the village is only 78.3 percent exogamous (The range for the four villages is from 75 to 83 percent.). Since 1911, six women have married men, mostly farmers, living in communities along the neighboring coast and only one an Inis Thiar islander, while four mainland and five Inis Thiar women have wed men from Inis Beag. During this same 50 year period, six local men have married into contiguous mainland settlements and one into Inis Thiar, but no men from the outside have married into the island. As we have noted already, immigrants for two or three generations are regarded as strangers by the folk, and the same is true of in-marrying wives; these women are treated aloofly and are the victims of much spiteful gossip. Many female siblings marry locally rather than emigrate—one case of four sisters, five of

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Despite sexual repression and the complaints of wives about large families, children are much desired by parents, and the fertility rate in Inis Beag is extremely high. An examination of 109 marriages between 1891 and 1960 reveals that the average number of offspring per couple is 6.4 (7.2 for marriages in which the wife has passed the menopause); this figure excludes spouses who are barren. The range in family size is between 1 and 16 offspring, and 18 of the 109 marriages have produced 7 children—the modal unit. Today, 6 couples are childless and as a result are "pitied" by their neighbors, who hold that it is the females who are sterile. At least 2 women, to my wife's knowledge, have been examined by obstetricians on the mainland and been found fecund; but they have been unable to persuade their spouses of the medical fact or get them to consult the doctors themselves. Men are anxious about their own maleness, as evidenced in the ability to produce offspring in this case, and have an eye to aid in their labors and to descent, succession, and inheritance. Women desire children, in part, to compensate for the lack of attention and affection from their mates.

Most of the enculturation during infancy and childhood in Inis Beag is done by mothers, as men are away much of the time and, if at home, "don't like to mind the kids." Mothers favor their sons, whom they "overprotect" and to whom they give "seductive" care. In the process of childrearing, sexual interest is first elicited and then blocked by punishing its behavioral manifestations. As a result of the mother's close ties to the male child, the father often is alienated from familial interaction, is hostile toward the youth, and fails to become a source of firm masculine attachment. Disliking to fulfill the responsibilities of enculturation and often in conflict with both his wife and male offspring, the father forces his mate to project herself into her role as childrearer to gain solace, and thus the cycle repeats itself. Although fathers tend to favor their daughters, their desire to "escape" the home discourages a pronounced Electra complex from arising. The bond between mother and son is so binding that it is not infrequent for marriage to be postponed after the death of the father, and the son to work the holding for his widowed mother until he has reached the age of confirmed bachelorhood. "This is also the basis for the conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law that is quite intense in Ireland, the prospect of which leads so many sons to refuse 'to bring another woman in on my mother' " (Humphreys 1965:246).

Within marriage, husbands tend to relate themselves to their wives as they have to their mothers when single. The wife is the "strong" person in the household, on whom the husband is emotionally dependent even when their relationship is one of mutual withdrawal and uncooperativeness. In most households, the wife shares at least equally in decision-making, and in many the husband bows to his spouse's decisions, not only in minor matters but in affairs of utmost importance to the family and those relating to activities normally within the male sphere, such as farming. It is the wife who invariably handles the money in the household. Freudians would see the influence of the mother image in the realm of sex: the rarity of conjugal love, the lack of sexual foreplay marked by little or no concern with the female breast, the brevity of the coital act and the frequent spurning of the woman following it, the need to degrade the female in the sexual act, and the

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168 829 [522] government increase its services and subsidies even more, reveal the underlying tension within those who are most strongly committed to the local tradition and wish its perpetuation.

167 168 829 12 The index of my field notes contains more references to emigration than to any other category, for seldom in an interview, whether guided or open-ended, did the topic fail to come up, no matter what was the initial subject under consideration. Of the more than 30 causes of the phenomenon yielded by my analysis, all are known to the folk, and they are ever eager to express opinions as to the relative weights which should be attached to those that they deem significant. My wife and I usually were solicited for our opinions as well whenever the topic was addressed. I will deal below with only the major causes of emigration from Inis Beag, and will consider first those which are internal—the "push" factors—and then those which are external—the "pull" factors. The islanders emphasize external causes in their own deliberations, but those who are not apologists for the *status quo*, or who are genuinely bewildered by the exodus of young people in recent years, are able to identify the internal ones also, but are less willing to assign them sufficient weight. Emigration is the topic about which my wife and I could be most objective and outspoken concerning the role of the church and obtain the most agreement and arouse the least resentment among our respondents.

167 428 589 592 [121] Paramount among the push factors are the previously considered system of inheritance and the causes underlying the prevalence of celibacy, late marriage, and personality depression. The fact that only one son in a family can inherit land, which forces his brothers to emigrate, is the internal factor most stressed in the literature pertaining to Inis Beag, but least stressed by the folk. The reason for this is that until recently it was rather common for siblings without land to remain on the island, thanks to the benevolence of their brothers and the government and their ability to support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing [162] shops, and obtaining remittances. Of the 71 households in Inis Beag, 28 are headed by male siblings: 20 in which 10 pairs of brothers and their families live, 3 in which 3 pairs of bachelor siblings reside, 3 in which 3 brothers and their families live, and 2 in which 3 siblings reside—two as bachelors in one and [182] the third with his family in the other. It is apparent that other factors, of equal or greater importance, are stimulating emigration.

167 168 581 [829] [162] The push factor given the most weight by the islanders is the unwillingness of men to marry—"The lads are too fussy, and the girls get tired of waiting and go off." But the fact that male "fussiness" is based on such conditions as parents opposing the marriage of their sons for various reasons and bachelors being loath to assume the responsibilities of marriage, especially its sexual responsibilities, seldom is probed. Sometimes it is the girls who are accused of "putting off" potential spouses by being too discriminating, but this accusation becomes untenable when one observes that there is but a single unmarried woman between the ages of 26 and 44 years in Inis Beag (as compared to 18 men), and that the average age at which women emigrate has dropped from 24.5 years during the 1941–1950 decade to 21.1 during the last decade (as compared to 24.9 to 23.8 for men). Some girls admit that they are emigrating because the possibility of their being asked to marry is remote, but far more of them are dissatisfied with the lot of married

human relationships are few. There is, in fact, little difference in the style of life between the most and the least prosperous of the islanders. The web of kinship rather than the possession of status attributes, for the most part, determines who will interact with whom and in what manner. Land and money are the principal symbols, with formal education and influential relatives (particularly priests, nuns, and teachers), on the mainland and abroad, becoming more important. Two generations ago, strength, courage, economic skills, and musical and storytelling abilities were highly regarded as well, but acculturation has lessened their significance.

Although there are fifty-nine nuclear families, only thirteen surnames exist today. There is much inbreeding, as might be expected, and the church carefully checks the genealogies of prospective spouses to ascertain their degree of consanguinity. Courtship is almost nonexistent, and most marriages are arranged with little concern for the desires of the young people involved. Late marriage and celibacy are as prevalent in Inis Beag as elsewhere in Ireland. The average marriage age for men is thirty-six and for women twenty-five, and 29 percent of those persons eligible for marriage are single.[3] The functions of the family are mainly economic and reproductive, and conjugal love is extremely rare. A sharp dichotomy exists between the sexes; both before and after marriage men interact mostly with men and women with women. The average family has seven offspring, and many women are unhappy about being forced by the unauthorized decree of local priests to produce as many children as possible. They feel that the constant bearing and rearing of offspring increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty of their families. Jealousy of the greater freedom of men is commonly expressed by women who have many young children. Mothers bestow a considerable amount of attention and affection on their offspring, especially on their sons. However, tensions between fathers and sons which develop in childhood often flare into scarcely repressed hostility

[3] Twenty-nine percent of those islanders of marriageable age are single. This rises to a high of 37 percent among first and second generation Inis Beag emigrants, indicating the actions of more than just economic causes. Irish scholars, for obvious reasons, tend to stress economic and other (climate, race, English oppression, the famine, loss of the Irish tongue, etc.) monistic causes in their analyses of culture and personality phenomena. Inadequate statistics for second and third generation migrants from Inis Beag suggest that the celibacy rate lowers markedly only when descendants of immigrants dissociate themselves from Irish ethnic communities and Irish-American priests. Ethnographic research is sorely needed among Irish of several generations in the countries to which they have migrated to probe this and other phenomena.

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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

I have already touched tangentially on some of the historical and broad cultural implications of sexual puritanism, in Ireland as well as Inis Beag. In this final section, I will examine the perennially addressed phenomena of late marriage, celibacy, and emigration, in their island setting, with special reference to the factor of sexual repression.

In a population of 350, 116 persons are married, 13 are widows, 3 are widowers, and 33 males over twenty-three years of age and 21 females over seventeen are single. Since marriage occurs between twenty-four and forty-five for men and eighteen and thirty-two for women, on the basis of past statistics, only 18 men and 9 women are eligible for marriage. As mentioned earlier, the average marriage age for males is thirty-six and for females twenty-five. My wife and I isolated almost two dozen interrelated causes of late marriage and the prevalence of bachelor and spinsterhood. The most emphasized cause in Ireland is the pattern of inheritance: one son, usually the eldest, must wait until the father is ready to pass on his patrimony and his own siblings have married or emigrated. In an attempt to alleviate the situation somewhat, a law today requires that to receive the "old-age" (pension) a man at seventy must will his property to a son, or other appropriate person. This cause is important in Inis Beag, although primogeniture is not so well defined (of those sons inheriting property, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and later). Inis Beag fathers are loath to surrender their land and control of the household to their sons and will often play off the sons, one against another, in order to achieve favored treatment for their wives and themselves in their waning years. Occasionally this procedure "backfires": the sons, acting in concert, emigrate together, and an increasing amount of land lies idle because of this.

Equally loath to disturb the family status quo, island mothers will often resist incoming daughters-in-law, who threaten not only their commanding position but the loss of their sons' affection. Mothers whom we have interviewed in Inis Beag and elsewhere in Ireland display the extreme of Oedipal attachment when they rejoice in their sons' decision

589 to join the priesthood; not only are spiritual blessings and prestige brought
593 to the family as a result, but their sons are at last removed from potential
[155] wives. Yet the Inis Beag man who wants to marry and is prevented from
[793] doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of much gossip. Outwardly, at least, his plight is considered a "shame."

831 To the man in his late twenties and thirties who is secure in his
581 home and has established regularized patterns of conduct (and has a
589 mother who acts in most ways as a wife surrogate), the general responsi-
567 bilities of marriage, and specifically its sexual responsibility, are factors
[593] militating against his seeking a spouse. Some men who have land, the consent of their parents, and willing "sweethearts" will balk at a match because they are too happy "running with the lads," and if persuaded to marry, they will try to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage. It was hinted to my wife and me on several occasions that particular island celibates almost married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment too difficult to make at the last moment.

162 Three other causes of late marriage and the single estate in Inis Beag
167 must be mentioned. Girls are more dissatisfied with their future lot than
582 are boys and men and are emigrating at ever younger ages, thus sharply
589 reducing the number of eligible females. During the 1950–1959 period,
[871] the average age at which girls emigrate dropped below twenty-one years.
[484] Each year more of them attend schools on the mainland and thus are
[178] more exposed to stimuli which promote emigration. Mothers are puzzled at the increasing exodus of their daughters, since women today have a far easier time than they did a generation or two ago; but some are glad
182 to see them escape the drudgery and boredom of island existence. Since
582 late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. We heard Inis Beag adults assert that marriage should be postponed to conform to island mores; this usually was buttressed by
829 a rationale of males not having "enough sense" to marry until they are
[561] nearly forty years of age. Reflected in this rationale is the male age-grading conceptualized by the folk: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until forty, an adult until sixty, middle-aged until eighty, and aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist approaching forty who comes
582 from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). A final cause, often
[586] articulated by the islanders, is the fact that divorce is impossible in Ireland, therefore the choice of a spouse must be well considered. It